

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PA-01 PRS-01

USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /048 W

----- 047266

R 270635Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7629

INFO DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1647

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINT, MA

SUBJECT: NEW CHIEF OF STAFF FOR MALAGASY ARMED FORCES

REF: TANANARIVE 1595

1. LOCAL PRESS SEPTEMBER 22 ANNOUNCED RETIREMENT OF BRIGADIER GENERAL PHILIBERT RAMAROLAHY AND HIS REPLACEMENT AS CHIEF OF STAFF OF MALAGASY ARMED FORCES BY LT COLONEL ALPHONSE RAKOTONIRAINY. REPORTS NOTED RAMAROLAHY PAID FAREWELL CALL ON PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA, AND STRESSED HIS 44 YEARS OF SERVICE IN FRENCH AND MALAGASY ARMED FORCES. RAMAROLAHY IN FAREWELL REMARKS TO MILITARY EMPHASIZED UNITY OF ARMED FORCES.

2. RAMAROLAHY'S RETIREMENT LEAVES MAJOR GENERAL ANDRIAMAHAZO, NOW CHAIRMAN OF MILITARY COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT, ONLY GENERAL OFFICER ON ACTIVE SERVICE IN MALAGASY ARMED FORCES. NOTEWORTHY IN APPOINTMENT OF LT COLONEL RAKOTONIRAINY AS RAMAROLAHY'S SUCCESSOR WAS PASSING OVER OF COLONEL ROLAND RABETAFIKA, ONLY FULL COLONEL ON ACTIVE SERVICE

3. RAKOTONIRQWRY WAS FORMERLY G-3 (OPERATIONS OFFICER) ON ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF. NEW CHIEF OF STAFF HAS BEEN ON GOOD TERMS WITH DATT, WHO CONSIDERS HIM COMPETENT AND INTELLIGENT PROFESSIONAL OFFICER. RAKOTONIRAINY NOT KNOWN
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TO BE CLOSELY LINKED TO PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PERSONNEL, PRESS COMMENTS, PERSONNEL SEPARATIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TANANA01647
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750338-0544
From: TANANARIVE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975099/aaaaahtq.tel
Line Count: 62
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 TANANARIVE 1595
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <12 DEC 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW CHIEF OF STAFF FOR MALAGASY ARMED FORCES
TAGS: MILI, PINT, MA, (RAMAROLAHY, PHILIBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006